

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for his careful analysis of the claims and his many recommendations of amendments that may result in their allowance. The Examiner has objected to claims 173, 197 and 198; and rejected claims 165-204 under 35 USC 112, paragraph 2 for not clearly and distinctly pointing out the matter that the Applicants regard as the invention. The Applicants have amended the claims as set forth above and submit that the application is now in proper form for allowance.

The Examiner has objected to claim 173 for informalities, and has suggested that "communication into said branch" be amended to read "communication with said branch." The Applicants have amended the claim as requested.

The Examiner has objected to claim 198 for informalities, and has suggested that "said downstream said" be amended to read "said downstream side." The Applicants have amended the claim as requested.

The Examiner has objected to claim 197 for depending on itself. The Applicants have amended the claim to depend on claim 192.

In view of these amendments, the Applicant traverse the objections of the Examiner.

The Examiner has rejected all of the claims for lack of clarity.

The Examiner has rejected claims 165 and 192 for lacking antecedent basis for "said ice" and "said remote locations." The Examiner has also suggested an amendment to the preamble of the claims. The Applicants have amended the preamble as suggested and have removed "said" as requested before the first use of "ice" and "remote locations." In claim 167, the Applicants have added "said" before the second use of "plurality of receptors."

The Examiner has rejected claim 167 for containing the phrase "two, three or four alternate branch ice conduits." The claim now recites that the plurality is in a range from two to four.

The Examiner has rejected claim 169 for containing the phrase "motivating routing."

The Applicants have removed the word "motivating" from the claim.

The Examiner has rejected claim 173 for being unclear as to what is "spaced apart." The Applicants have amended the claim to recite that "spaced apart" refers to the distance between the vacuum line and the second point of connection.

The Examiner has rejected claim 174 for being unclear and suggested inserting a comma in the claim and adding the word "the" at two places in the claim. The Applicants have added the comma and the word "said" rather than "the," as suggested, to use the term that had been used throughout the claims.

The Examiner has rejected claim 176 for being unclear as to what "maximum inside width" referred. The Applicants have amended the claim to make it clear that "maximum inside width" refers to the vacuum line.

The Examiner has rejected claim 184 for being unclear as to what "removes from said conduit." The Applicants have amended the claim to make it clear that the cleaner removes from the conduit.

The Applicants submit that the claims are now clear and definite, meeting the requirement of 35 USC 112, paragraph 2. Therefore the rejection is traversed.

The Examiner stated that none of the references individually or collectively teach or anticipate the claimed invention. Therefore, the Applicants submit that the case is now in proper form for allowance.

FEES

It is believed that there are no fees due with this response. However, if a fee is due, the Commissioner is hereby entitled to charge Deposit Account 50-1990 referencing case number 7480-PA1CP2.


CONCLUSIONS

The Applicants submit that in view of the forgoing amendments and comments the

Application is now in proper form for allowance and hereby request that the Examiner withdraw his objections and rejections in this case. However, if the Examiner believes that outstanding issues remain in the case that may be addressed by a telephonic interview, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the Agent for Applicant listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: March 10, 2004

By: 
Colleen J. McKiernan
Agent for Applicant
Registration No. 48,570

GORDON & REES LLP
1660 Union Street
San Diego, California 92101-2926

Telephone: (619) 238-0999
Facsimile: (619) 238-0062

Docket No.: 7840-PA1CP2